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1 November 1964

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
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State Department review completed

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

CONTENTS

1. Bolivia: Barrientos minimizes Communist threat and stresses importance of early US recognition.
(Page 1)

25X1

4. Czechoslovakia: Prague may be seeking some gesture of US support for its recent show of independence from Moscow. (Page 4)
5. Israel-Syria: Both sides preparing for possible new border trouble. (Page 5)
6. India: Shastri government not yet dealing effectively with current food shortages. (Page 6)
7. British Guiana: London foresees certain threats to security in connection with December election.
(Page 7)
8. Notes: Laos; [redacted] Italy - Communist China; Portugal - West Germany. (Page 8)

25X1

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25X1

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DAILY BRIEF

*Bolivia: Junta president Barrientos is showing an inability to discern and assess Communist moves to gain influence under the new regime.

In a recent conversation with Ambassador Henderson, Barrientos denied that one of his close advisers is pro-Communist, as the US believes. He shrugged off the possibility that Communists and extreme leftists might be using him, and claimed that immediate US recognition was needed to counter the Communist threat.

Barrientos is under the impression that the Communists are now readying for a head-on collision with the government and will come out in the open and fight where they can be destroyed. Other information, however, indicates that the Communists do not want a direct confrontation with the military at the present time.

In a separate conversation with the ambassador, the commander in chief of the armed forces, General Ovando, also stressed the importance of early US recognition. He said that the armed forces hope to enlist the cooperation of the center-right Bolivian Socialist Falange. Such a combination, Ovando believes, could effectively deal with the extreme left consisting of former vice president Juan Lechin's National Leftist Revolutionary Party, the Communist Party, the miners, and other leftist groups.

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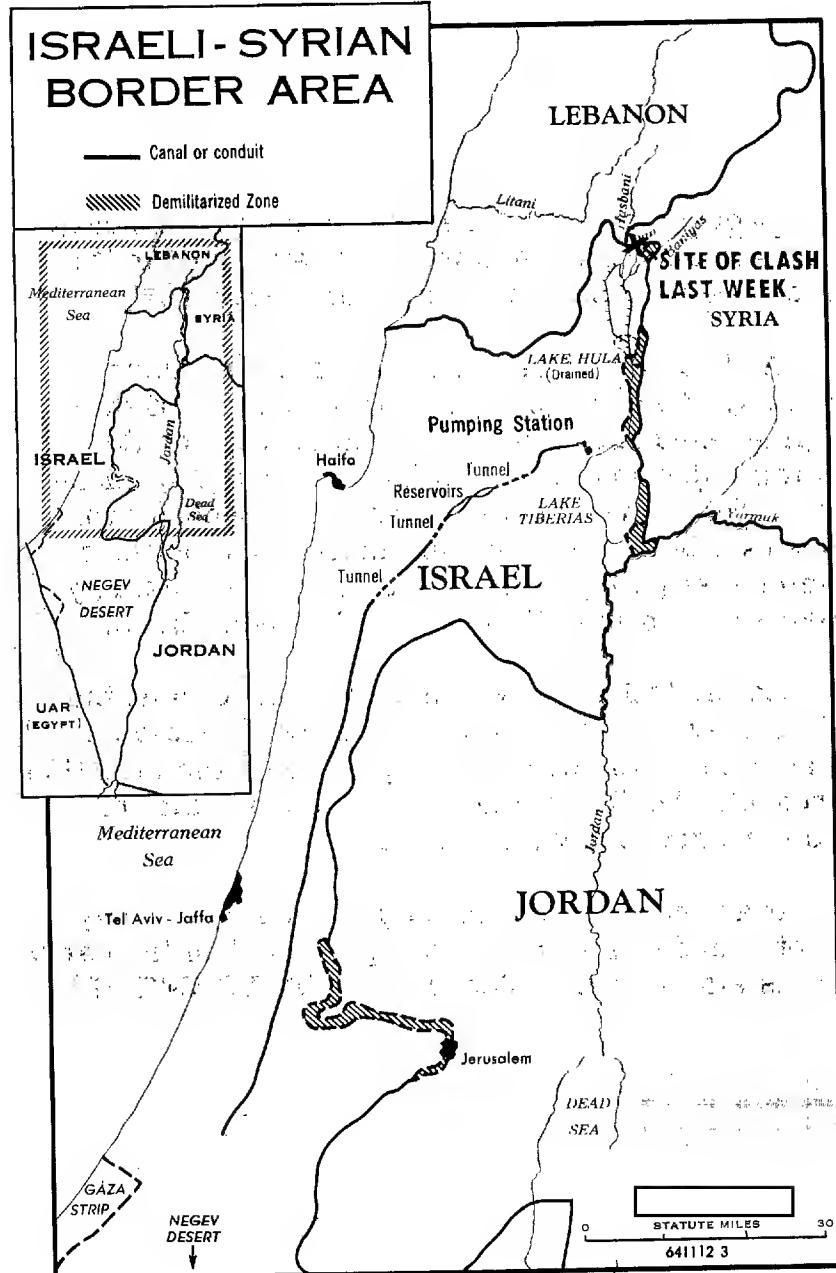
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Czechoslovakia: The Prague regime appears to be seeking some gesture of US support for its recent show of independence from Moscow.

A US defector in Prague recently contacted embassy officers--probably at the behest of the regime--and provided a detailed account of Novotny's objection to the leadership change in Moscow. The source asserted that the Czechoslovak leaders intend to pursue an "independent national Communist policy," and to introduce increasingly liberal domestic policies along Yugoslav lines.

An invitation for Premier Lenart to visit the US, if only for some cultural purpose, would be most timely, the source said, because the situation "presents the US with an unusual opportunity to woo the Czechs away from Moscow."

Unanimously re-elected president yesterday, Novotny appears to have strong support in the party for his stand toward Moscow. [redacted]

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*Israel-Syria: [Both Israel and Syria are preparing for possible new border trouble.]

[The Syrians have moved additional troops, tanks, and heavy weapons to the northern end of the Israeli-Syrian border. In the event of any new trouble, the Syrians reportedly are prepared to "retaliate" heavily for damage the Israelis inflicted on a Syrian village during a clash in this area last week. The clash, like others in the past, grew out of Syrian objections to Israeli development activity at points along the disputed frontier.]

[On the Israeli side, reinforcements have been observed moving into the same area. Thus far, however, the Israeli movements appear to be defensive.]

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(Map)

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India: The Shastri government is not yet dealing effectively with India's current food shortages.

The Prime Minister's proposal to institute food rationing in major population centers was rejected as unworkable by the chief ministers of most of India's states at a recent conference. In Kerala, where New Delhi is exercising direct rule, a rationing scheme was initiated on 1 November, but demonstrations broke out before the scheme could have any direct impact.

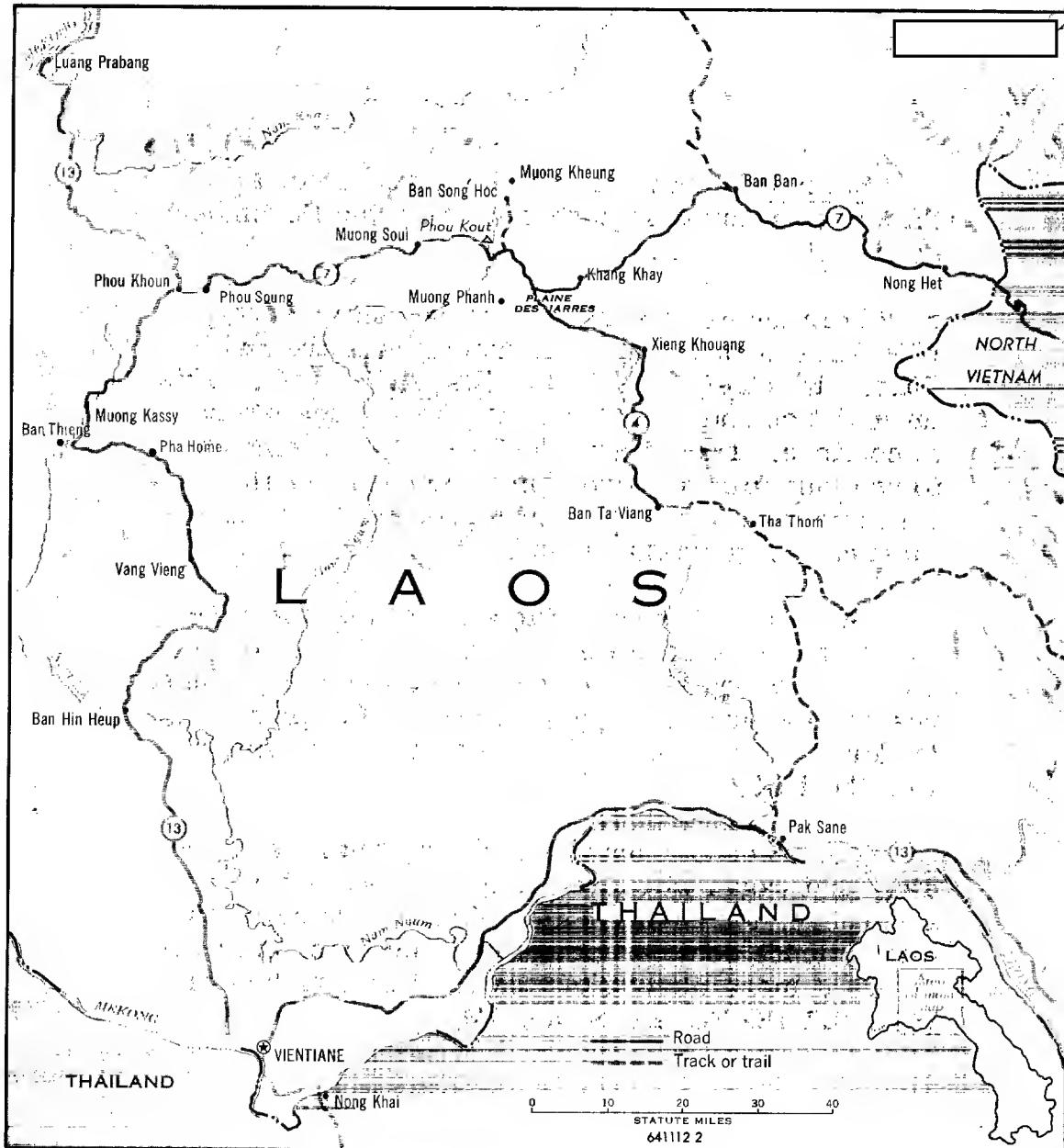
Indian leaders generally have continued to focus primarily on the long-range aspects of the problem, in the belief that food-grain crops now being harvested would relieve the immediate distress. This expectation is not being borne out. Although the harvest is good, the distribution system is not moving the current crop to market fast enough in areas where shortages are acute. [redacted]

25X1

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British Guiana:

25X1

25X1

[Premier Jagan's Peoples Progressive Party (PPP) has been intimidating members of the Justice Party--its chief rival for the East Indian vote. This intimidation and purely racial incidents are likely to continue. In addition, the PPP may be tempted to use last-minute terrorism to stop the election if it seems to be losing too much ground as the electoral campaign nears its end.]

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[People's National Congress leader Burnham rejects any postelection coalition with the PPP]

[The US consul general in Georgetown also predicts that Jagan will lose and go into opposition to a Burnham-led coalition government. He believes that violence could erupt again at any time, but considers it more likely after the election than before.]

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NOTES

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[REDACTED]

Laos: [The military situation in central Laos remains fluid. Communist countermoves against a recent clearing operation by government forces have placed the latter on the defensive in the hills north of Tha Thom. The Communists have pushed small-scale probing actions to within a few miles of the town, which guards the approaches to the Mekong lowlands north of Pak Sane, but it is not yet clear whether they intend to press the attack.]

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Italy - Communist China: Foreign Minister Saragat's chief of cabinet informed the US Embassy on 11 November that Italy is resuming negotiations with Peiping for an exchange of quasi-official trade offices. It is unlikely that there are any important obstacles to an early agreement. Talks on this issue were well advanced last summer when Rome, out of deference to US views, decided to postpone definitive action until after the US elections. The Italian official also hinted that, while no decision has yet been reached, Italy might abstain on the question of Chinese UN representation at this year's General Assembly session.

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Portugal - West Germany: [Portugal purchased F-86s from the West German Government last week for use in its African territories,

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25X1

[The first planes to be delivered will be sent by sea to Portuguese Guinea and will not be available for combat until February 1965. These first planes will replace the eight US-supplied F-86s which have been in use in Portuguese Guinea despite US protests. Two of the latter have been withdrawn, but Portugal will probably use those remaining until the arrival of the German planes.]

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